Repatriation of Hijackers of IC-814 Flight

† 1304. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made a formal request to Government of Pakistan to repatriate the five hijackers and their two accomplices responsible for hijacking of aircraft IC-8I4 of Indian Airlines in December last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government of Pakistan thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Government have provided evidence to the Government of Pakistan indicating the involvement of its nationals in the hijacking of IC-814 in December 1999. Government have also informed Pakistan that there are grounds to believe that the hijackers are currently in Pakistan. Government have reminded the Government of Pakistan that as a signatory to several International Conventions against Terrorism, as also the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration, it has the obligation to take the hijackers into custody and to extradite them to India.

(c) The Government of Pakistan, in its response has reiterated the general position that it would undertake to apprehend and prosecute any person or persons found on its territory or the territory of Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir who may be suspected of having committed such offences related to hijacking. However, as they have at the same time rejected our demarche, Pakistan's general commitment is of little value.

General Musharraf's Offer for Dialogue

† 1305. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the official reaction of Pakistan's Chief Executive Gen. Pervez Musharraf offer for a dialogue, "Anytime, any plan and at any level";

(b) how long will this status continue;

(c) whether Government would think of initiating some sort of dialogue inspite of Pakistan's encouragement to cross border terrorism, provocation to extremism and constant advocacy of Jehad; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether the dialogue cannot be kept with Pakistan on, to find a lasting solution to this vexed Kashmir problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (d) Government is committed to the resolution of all outstanding issues with Pakistan through peaceful discussions, as envisaged under the Simla Agreement and reaffirmed in the Lahore Declaration. India has called upon Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism and abandon hostile propaganda so that an environment appropriate for a dialogue is created.

Downsizing in the Establishment of MEA

1306. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has prepared a road map for a drastic cut in the establishment of his Ministry including the foreign Mission abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated savings which accrue as a result of the downsizing; and

(d) whether the diplomatic requirements of the country have been adequately protected before resorting to the downsizing of the embassy staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise, Sir.

Britain's Continued Sale of Arms to Pakistan

1307. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Britain will continue arms sale to Pakistan and has not lifted the ban on the same; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The British Government announced on 5th July, 2000, that they have issued 20 standard individual export licenses to Pakistan for a narrow and well-defined range of equipment, such as naval spares, bomb disposal equipment, goods for civilian end users.